

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-19 (Canceled).

Claim 20 (New): A method of anchoring a joining element in a first body comprising a porous material, wherein the joining element has first and second end portions, said first end portion comprising a thermoplastic material, said method comprising the steps of:

positioning the first end portion of the joining element on a surface of the first body;

applying a force to the second end portion of the joining element such that the first end portion of the joining element breaks through the surface of the first body and penetrates into the porous material; and

once the first end portion of the body reaches a predetermined depth in the porous material of the first body or once the force reaches a certain magnitude, applying a mechanical vibration to the second end portion of the joining element, while still applying the force to the second end portion, whereby the application of the mechanical vibration and the force to the second end portion causes the thermoplastic material of the first end portion to liquefy and be pressed into the

porous material of the first body, thereby anchoring the joining element in the first body..

Claim 21 (New): The method according to claim 20, wherein the mechanical vibration is ultrasound vibration.

Claim 22 (New): The method according to claim 20, further comprising the step of rotating the joining element around an axis extending between the first and second end portions, said rotating step being performed while the force is applied to the second end portion of the joining element to break through the surface of the first body.

Claim 23 (New): The method according to claim 22, further comprising the step of disposing a second body over the first body, said second body having an opening extending therethrough, and wherein the step of positioning the first end portion of the joining element is performed by inserting the first end portion of the joining element through the opening in the second body and into contact with the surface of the first body.

Claim 24 (New): The method according to claim 23, further comprising the step of positioning between the first and second bodies a layer of material that is liquefiable by the mechanical vibration.

Claim 25 (New): The method according to claim 20, wherein the joining element comprises a cross section that is round or polygonal.

Claim 26 (New): The method according to claim 25, wherein the joining element comprises energy-directing elements in the form of axially-extending ribs.

Claim 27 (New): A combination of a joining element and a body comprising a porous material, wherein said joining element comprises first and second end portions, said first end portion comprising a thermoplastic material and including a pointed end or a cutting edge, said combination being formed by positioning the first end portion of the joining element on a surface of the first body and applying a force to the second end portion of the joining element such that the first end portion of the joining element breaks through the surface of the first body and penetrates into the porous material, thereby compressing the porous material disposed around the first end portion.

Claim 28 (New): The combination of claim 27, wherein the joining element is pin-shaped and has at least two areas with different cross-sections.

Claim 29 (New): The combination of claim 28, wherein one of the cross-sections is round or polygonal.

Claim 30 (New): The combination of claim 28, wherein at least one of the areas comprises energy-directing elements in the form of axially-extending ribs.

Claim 31 (New): The combination of claim 28, wherein a first one of the areas has a smaller cross-section than a second one of the areas, said first one of the areas comprising energy-directing elements in the form of axially-extending ribs, and said second one of the areas comprises a ring of sharp-ended elements that are directed toward the first one of the areas.

Claim 32 (New): The combination of claim 31, wherein the joining element further comprises a fastening element.